

# INFORMATION REPORT

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Medical Volunteers for the Korean Front

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. From about November 1950, volunteer medical units began to go from Chinese cities into Manchuria and Korea in increasing numbers. Well known hospital doctors and very prosperous practitioners from Peking, Tientsin and Shanghai are found among the members of the volunteer units.
2. Members are recruited for such volunteer units in the following way. Party members or their supporters take a volunteer roll call sheet to the hospital offices for signatures. First they visit the head of the hospital, who is a non-party member in most places south of the Great Wall. Fully aware of the political pressure behind such a request, the head of the hospital has very little choice but to sign. With the head's signature on, the sheet is then taken to the division and departmental chiefs. Similarly aware of the political pressure and conscious of the watching eyes in his own division or department, there is again no alternative but to sign up. Armed with signatures of the executives, the sheet is next circulated among the staff doctors who, in almost all cases, are obliged to put down their names.
3. In this way, the executives, doctors, nurses and attendants of the whole hospital become volunteers for service on the Korean front. The authorities then select from this list a certain number to organize a volunteer medical unit to be sent out. The others are held in readiness to go when the first unit returns.
4. The signing up of private practitioners is far less complete than in the case of hospitals. So far as is known, the proportion of private doctors in the volunteer units is small, perhaps less than 10 per cent. The first approach is made to the well known and prosperous doctors. Under persuasion they soon find it wise to put their names down on the volunteer sheet, for they realize that their security is politically determined, that many of them have an Anglo-American educational background and that the government estimate of income and business taxes might have some connection with their willingness to serve. Furthermore, if he is a prosperous doctor, a few months' absence while at the front will not starve his family. All such considerations taken

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together, he, like the hospital doctors, will put his name down for volunteer service. Then he is given the duty of rallying the other less well known people to join.

5. At the start, many doctors balked.

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The whole drive for volunteers slowed down, and the political authorities took action on the case, almost forcing him to resign.

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However, in Peking there is more personal freedom than in other places. In Canton, the staffs of entire hospitals silently sign up, especially the government hospitals like the Central Hospital.

6. Most of the volunteer units do not go directly to the Korean front, but stay at the rear base hospitals in Manchuria in such places as Changchun. Those who have returned say that, though they are unpaid, the food and living conditions provided are excellent, and the working equipment and base hospitals are first-class.
7. Volunteer teams go by rotation, each team staying about 4 months. Once they are in Manchuria, their morale is said to be high. The rotation system is set up partly to avoid protracted withdrawal of doctors from medical institutions and crippling of medical services, and partly to give as many doctors as possible the experience and training of military medical service. Perhaps for the latter reason, even the staff of the railway infirmary of the Canton-Hankow line is now called upon to send volunteer units up to the front.

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